

REMARKS

Claims 8 and 10-12 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2 and 4-7 are canceled to place this application in condition for allowance.

Entry of the amendments is proper under 37 C.F.R. §1.116 since the amendments: (a) place the application in condition for allowance (for the reasons discussed herein); (b) do not raise any new issue requiring further search and/or consideration (since the amendments amplify issues previously discussed throughout prosecution); (c) satisfy a requirement of form asserted in the previous Office Action; (d) do not present any additional claims without canceling a corresponding number of finally rejected claims; and (e) place the application in better form for appeal, should an appeal be necessary. The amendments are necessary and were not earlier presented because they are made in response to arguments raised in the final rejection. Entry of the amendments is thus respectfully requested.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Office Action's indication that claims 8 and 10-12 are allowable. In response, the rejected claims are canceled to place the application in condition for allowance.

I. The Claims Define Patentable Subject Matter

The Office Action rejects claims 1, 2 and 4-7 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over JP 08-029153 to Fukuda et al. in view of WO 90/12277 to Beille. In response, claims 1, 2 and 4-7 are canceled to place the application in condition for allowance.

Applicants request that the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) be withdrawn.

II. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 8 and 10-12 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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